

Middletown Commission on the Arts

Minutes, October 23, 2013

Present

Cassandra Day (chair)
Jenny Hawkins Lecce (vice chair)
Franca Biales (sec.)
Barbara Arafeh (left 8:15)
Lee Godburn
Joyce Kirkpatrick
Charlotte McCoid (7:09)
Richard Kamins (7:10)
Fran Ganguli
Linda Salafia (7:12)

Also Present

Stephan Allison, staff
Deb Kleckowski (7:22-8:35)

Absent

Lea Tomaszewski

Call to order

Commission Chair Cassandra Day called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in room 208, Municipal Building, 245 DeKoven Drive

Public session: Thomas Hirsch spoke. He is looking to make a donation of some pictures or paintings he has in his collection. He inquired about the procedure for donating art. It was recommended that he speak with the Public Art Committee.

Minutes from September, 25, 2013

Motion to approve by Commissioner Godburn, seconded by Commissioner Kamins. No discussion. Motion passed with two abstentions, Commissioners Arafeh and Ganguli.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the meeting agenda as written, by Commissioner Hawkins Lecce, seconded by Commissioner McCoid. Carried unanimously.

Remarks from the Chair Chairperson Day thanked everyone for coming tonight. She shared that this past week Connecticut Magazine ranked Middletown as 2nd in its class for the number of restaurants, stores, theaters, museums, concert venues, local newspapers, websites, tv and radio stations. It also came in 1st in voter turnout.

Old Business:

a) **Budget Report**

Allison electronically distributed the current spreadsheets for review prior to the meeting. Allison explained there were only 3 transactions and they were monthly transactions for the Arts Calendar.

b) **Program Update**

- i. Arts Stakeholders Group: 32 out of 104 members responded to an email that Allison sent out to determine interest in convening the Art Stakeholders Group. Commissioner Arafeh asked for the number of organizations that responded rather than just number of members.

c) **Visual Arts Competition**

Community Supported Art- an article from the NY Times. Allison sent copies to commissioners to read and see if it is something Middletown might want to do. CSA is worthwhile but needs time. There was discussion. Allison said it is difficult to draw out visual artists. One idea was having artist paint utility boxes. Another was to have art from local artists printed on vinyl and hang it on store fronts/government buildings around Main St. Such as was done in Urbana, IL. Hawkins Lecce noted this might be good for buildings that are vacant. NYC did something similar. It's a start- good to start

small. Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested perhaps moving the Big Draw downtown and have it coincide with the exhibit. Allison will discuss this further with the Mayor.

- d) **Grant Review Process** - Category 1 will go back to simple form which is same as for category 2 and 3 but will ask for greater narrative and more involved budget.

Committee Reports:

- a) **Public Art Committee**

Baldassini Reception plans – Hawkins Lecce reported that he would like a very small reception. McCoid said Earle Roberts has furniture that is John Risley’s work. He and his wife were Middletown residents and artists. His work is playful and now collectible. McCoid went to see it and took pictures that she shared with the Commission. Godburn asked where it would be displayed. The Committee will investigate opportunities for donation and/or purchase and report back.

- b) **Planning & Projects Committee** – Godburn asked the Commission for suggestions of groups or individuals to be considered for the Art Advocacy Award. Suggestions to be shared at the next meeting.

- c) **Nominating Committee**

Kamins reported that he spoke with the Mayor about Sue Birch- music promoter, and music library manager. She lives in the city. Day also spoke with the Mayor about filling the vacancy on MCA.

- i. Review of Bylaws – no update
 - ii. Nomination suggestions-we currently have one vacancy. Allison said the Mayor would like to appoint a person who is involved with the people in an arts way.

- d) **Other (including Publicity Committee, Kids Arts Committee, Archive Committee)**

Matt Pugliese has left Oddfellows and has gone to UCONN Repertory Theater.

New Business:

- a) **Grant Panel make-up and a motion to adjust policy regarding same**

At the last meeting Hawkins Lecce made a motion to allow the commission to alter the language of our policy to include the full commission, as available, on the grant panel, with a minimum of three confirmed panelists and one alternate. Discussion ensued about whether it would be too intimidating to applicants to have so many people present. Godburn suggested we keep going the way we have been, with the understanding that other commissioners can attend and are welcome to attend as observers only. Day granted permission to Councilwoman Kleckowski from the public to speak. She shared how her commission reviews HUD grants. Will discuss further at next meeting.

- b) **Grant decisions**

Kamins made motion to accept all the recommendations of the grant panel, Salafia seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MARC Community Resources	\$1,000
Oddfellows Playhouse Youth Theater	\$3,000
Suzanne Elliot- Russell Library	\$1,000
Santo Fragilio-MPSCC	\$1,000
Joe Fonda-Kaleidoscope Arts	\$2,000
GSAC	\$0
Artfarm	\$0
NEAR	\$1000
Salt Marsh Opera Company	\$3000
Young Audience Arts for Learning CT	\$0
YMCA Kids’ Korner	\$0

Miscellaneous:

- a) **Grant Reports**-no report
- b) **Announcements**

McCoid announced- The Benefit Bowl will be Nov.14, 2013 at MHS. There will be several types of chili.

Kamins announced -On November 17, 2013 there will be an interfaith Thanksgiving at the synagogue celebrating Middletown arts. Donations will benefit programs administered by St. Vincent DePaul Place.

Kamins announced- On November 23-24, 2013 the Vintage Players will be performing short plays at the synagogue.

Allison announced he has applied for a grant from COA for general operating support that may be used to purchase 20 banners.

Kirkpatrick announced the passing of Marjorie Daultry Rosenbaum who served as the first chair of MCA. She was a great musician and a musical person.

Kirkpatrick made a motion to send a condolence card to the family from the MCA. Kamins seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Kirkpatrick announced- The Middletown Chorale has been preparing Jewish music and will be presenting a concert on Nov 23 and 24 at Zion Lutheran Church in Portland.

MCA advertising for arts2go.org is part of restaurant week in Middletown (10/21-27)

Godburn reported making \$10,000 for Artists for World Peace through the event in NYC.

Middletown was well represented in NYC last weekend.

Hawkins Lecce reported that this past weekend the MHS marching band performed beautifully in Southington.

Adjournment:

Chair Day entertained a motion from Kamins to adjourn at 9:28 p.m., seconded by Godburn. The MCA will next meet for its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2013 at 7:00 pm, City Arts Office, 100 Riverview Center- Suite 140.

Respectfully submitted,
Franca Biales